

FORM PTO-1390
(Rev. 9-2001)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER

**TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371**

029777-008

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 C.F.R. 1.5)

Unassigned **10/049880**INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.
PCT/DE00/02800INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE
August 17, 2000PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED
August 19, 1999

TITLE OF INVENTION

SEMI-FINISHED AND FINISHED PRODUCTS MADE OF AUSTENITIC SPECIAL STEEL, AND METHOD FOR THE MANUFACTURE THEREOF

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

Heinrich FRIEDERICH and Reinhard SCHMOOK

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)). The submission must include items (5), (6), (9) and (21) indicated below
4. ☒ The US has been elected by the expiration of 19 months from the priority date (Article 31).
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☒ is attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ has been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☒ An English language translation of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☒ is attached hereto.
 - b. ☐ has been previously submitted under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
7. ☒ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☒ are attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☒ An English language translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3)).
9. ☐ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☐ An English language translation of the annexes to the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11 to 20 below concern document(s) or information included:

11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☐ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A **FIRST** preliminary amendment
14. ☐ A **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** preliminary amendment.
15. ☐ A substitute specification.
16. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
17. ☐ A computer-readable form of the sequence listing in accordance with PCT Rule 13ter.2 and 35 U.S.C. 1.821 - 1.825.
18. ☐ A second copy of the published international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
19. ☐ A second copy of the English language translation of the international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
20. ☒ Other items or information:

Verification of Translation, International Search Report and English translation, amended claim replacement sheets and English translation

**21839**

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.51) Unassigned	INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/DE00/02800	ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER 029777-008
21. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following fees are submitted:		CALCULATIONS
Basic National Fee (37 CFR 1.492(a)(1)-(5)): Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$1,040.00 (960) International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO \$890.00 (970) International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$740.00 (958) International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$710.00 (956) International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$100.00 (962)		
ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =		\$ 890.00
Surcharge of \$130.00 (154) for furnishing the oath or declaration later than months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).		
Claims	Number Filed	Number Extra
Total Claims	12 -20 =	0
Independent Claims	2 -3 =	0
Multiple dependent claim(s) (if applicable)		+ \$280.00 (968)
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =		\$ 890.00
Reduction for 1/2 for filing by small entity, if applicable (see below).		+ \$ 0
SUBTOTAL =		\$ 890.00
Processing fee of \$130.00 (156) for furnishing the English translation later than months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).		
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =		\$ 890.00
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 (581) per property		
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =		\$ 890.00
		Amount to be refunded: \$
		charged: \$
a. <input type="checkbox"/> Small entity status is hereby claimed. b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of \$ <u>890.00</u> to cover the above fees is enclosed. c. <input type="checkbox"/> Please charge my Deposit Account No. <u>02-4800</u> in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed. d. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. <u>02-4800</u> . A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed. NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137(a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status.		
SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: Ronald L. Grudziecki BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P. P.O. Box 1404 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404 (703) 836-6620		
SIGNATURE Scott W. Cummings NAME		41,567 REGISTRATION NUMBER
		February 19, 2002 DATE

Patent
Attorney's Docket No. 029777-008

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of)	
)	
Heinrich FRIEDERICH et al.)	Group Art Unit: Unassigned
)	
Application No.: PCT/DE00/02800)	Examiner: Unassigned
)	
Filed: August 17, 2000)	
)	
For: SEMI-FINISHED AND FINISHED)	
PRODUCTS MADE OF)	
AUSTENITIC SPECIAL STEEL,)	
AND METHOD FOR THE)	
MANUFACTURE THEREOF)	

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to examination of the above-identified application, please amend the claims of published PCT application PCT/DE00/02800, as specified below.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

Please add the Abstract attached hereto as a separate sheet.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace claims 1-12 with the corresponding amended claims.

1. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products in the form of sheets, profiles or shafts made of corrosion-resistant, precipitation hardenable, austenitic special steel with a high interstitially dissolved nitrogen content, with substantially smooth

surfaces, wherein the steel material is precipitation hardened in a zoned manner, and the steel has a chemical composition comprising:

C 0.08-0.115 %;

Mn 1.5-4 %;

Mo 0.3-1.5 %;

Cr 17.5-20 %;

Ni 10-13 %; and

N 0.2-0.5 %

wherein the remainder is substantially composed of iron.

2. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 1, wherein the steel material is inductively precipitation hardened in a zoned manner.

3. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 1, wherein they are at least partly hardened in a surface layer, wherein the thickness of the precipitation hardened layer is less than 50%, preferably less than 30% and in particular less than 10% of the material thickness measured perpendicular to the surface.

4. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 1, wherein they are either sheets or profile rods with a substantially constant cross-section over their length.

wherein the remainder is substantially composed of iron, in that the material worked in the still hot, or re-heated state into semi-finished and finished products with a substantially smooth surface, and as required can also be cold-worked, and in that subsequently a precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken that affects at the most a part of the volume of the semi-finished and/or finished products.

9. (Amended) Method according to claim 8, wherein inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken in a temperature range of 300°C to 550°C.

10. (Amended) Method according to claim 8, wherein inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken such that the precipitation hardening only occurs in a surface layer with a layer thickness of 0.5 mm at the most.

11. (Amended) Method according to claim 8, wherein the material is substantially endless material or rod material or respectively sheet material that is passed continuously through an induction apparatus.

12. (Amended) Method according to claim 8, wherein instead of inductive treatment, precipitation hardening is done by laser irradiation.

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Please cancel claims 13-15 without prejudice or disclaimer.

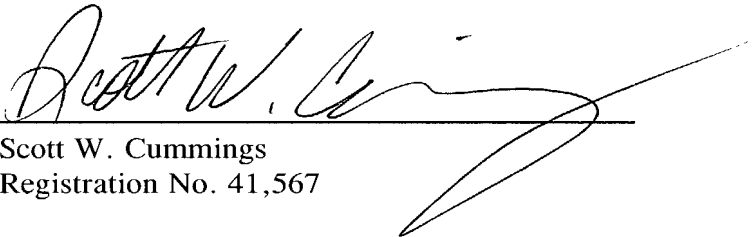
REMARKS

The amendments to the claims were made to remove multiple dependencies and place the claims in proper form. No new matter has been added. An Abstract is attached.

Early examination and allowance of claims 1-12, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

By: 

Scott W. Cummings
Registration No. 41,567

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620

Date: February 19, 2002

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated February 19, 2002

Marked-up Claims 1-12

1. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products in the form of sheets, profiles or shafts made of corrosion-resistant, precipitation hardenable, austenitic special steel with a high interstitially dissolved nitrogen content, with substantially smooth surfaces, [characterised in that] wherein the steel material is precipitation hardened in a zoned manner, and [in that] the steel has a chemical composition comprising [within the following ranges]:

C 0.08-0.115%;

Mn 1.5-4%;

Mo 0.3-1.5%;

Cr 17.5-20%;

Ni 10-13%; and

N 0.2-0.5%

wherein the remainder is substantially composed of iron.

2. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 1, [characterised in that] wherein the steel material is inductively precipitation hardened in a zoned manner.

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Marked-up Claims 1-12

3. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 1 [or 2], [characterised in that] wherein they are at least partly hardened in a surface layer, wherein the thickness of the precipitation hardened layer is less than 50%, preferably less than 30% and in particular less than 10% of the material thickness measured perpendicular to the surface.

4. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products according to [one of claims 1 to 3] claim 1, [characterised in that] wherein they are either sheets or profile rods with a substantially constant cross-section over their length [the steel has a chemical composition within the following ranges:

C 0.02-0.12%

Mn 1-16%

Mo 0-3%

Cr 16-26%

Ni 0-15%

N 0.2-0.9%

wherein the remainder is substantially composed of iron].

6. (Amended) Semi-finished and finished products according to [one of claims 1 to] claim 5, [characterized in that] wherein [they are either sheets or profile rods] the steel material is a sheet or a plate with [a] substantially constant [cross-section over their length] material thickness.

wherein the remainder is substantially composed of iron, in that the material worked in the still hot, or re-heated state into semi-finished and finished products with a substantially smooth surface, and as required can also be cold-worked, and in that subsequently a

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated February 19, 2002**Marked-up Claims 1-12**

precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken that affects at the most a part of the volume of the semi-finished and/or finished products.

9. (Amended) [Finished product according to one of claims 1 to 5, characterised in that it is a shaft with a diameter that varies along its axial length] Method according to claim 8, wherein inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken in a temperature range of 300°C to 550°C.

10. (Amended) Method [for manufacturing semi-finished and finished products from corrosion-resistant, precipitation hardenable, austenitic special steel with a high interstitially dissolved nitrogen content, characterised in that a steel material with the following chemical composition is firstly manufactured:

C	0.02-0.12 %
Mn	1-16 %
Mo	0-3 %
Cr	16-26 %
Ni	0-15 %
N	0.2-0.9 %

wherein the remainder is substantially composed of iron, in that the material worked in the still hot, or re-heated state, and as required can also be cold-worked, and in that

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Marked-up Claims 1-12

subsequently a precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken that affects at the most a part of the volume of the semi-finished and/or finished products] according to claim 8, wherein inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken such that the precipitation hardening only occurs in a surface layer with a layer thickness of 0.5 mm at the most.

11. (Amended) Method according to claim 8 [10], [characterised in that] wherein [inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken in a temperature range of 300°C to 550°C] the material is substantially endless material or rod material or respectively sheet material that is passed continuously through an induction apparatus.

12. (Amended) Method according to claim 8 [10], [characterised in that] wherein [inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken such that the precipitation hardening only occurs in a surface layer with a layer thickness of 0.5 mm at the most] instead of inductive treatment, precipitation hardening is done by laser irradiation.

Application No. PCT/DE00/02800

Attorney's Docket No. 029777-008

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention relates to semifinished and finished products made from special corrosion-resistant precipitation-hardened austenitic steel containing a large amount of interstitially dissolved nitrogen, comprising substantially smooth surfaces. The invention also relates to a method for producing corresponding semifinished and finished items. The aim of the invention is to produce semifinished and finished items and to provide an economical method for the production thereof, combining both solidity and resistance to corrosion. This is achieved by precipitation-hardening areas of the steel material.

Semi-finished and finished products made of austenitic special steel,
and method for the manufacture thereof

Priority: German Utility Patent No. 299 14 269 of 19.08.1999

5 German Utility Patent No. 299 14 802 of 24.08.1999

German Utility Patent No. 299 16 517 of 15.09.1999

German Utility Patent No. 299 21 121 of 01.12.1999

German Utility Patent No. 299 21 813 of 12.12. 1999

10 The present invention relates to semi-finished and finished products manufactured from corrosion-resistant precipitation hardenable austenitic special steel with a high content of interstitially dissolved nitrogen, with substantially smooth surfaces. The present invention also relates to a method for manufacturing corresponding semi-finished and finished products.

15 Within the framework of the present description, semi-finished and finished products with substantially smooth surfaces are understood as semi-finished and finished steel products, the dimensions of corresponding surface structures are to some extent comparable with the dimensions of the material itself, that is to say in particular with the thickness of the material, in contrast to components such as, for example, screws,
20 which are to be considered as sharply notched components. In particular, in the case of the articles to which the present invention relates, corresponding structures are typically in the region of clearly more than 1 mm. The present invention mainly extends to profile parts and/or sheets, that is to say to parts having a substantially constant profile over their length, be this delimited by a circular, elliptic, polygonal or
25 a more or less irregular contour. In the case of profiled rods, the material thickness should as a rule be more than 1 mm, and in the case of sheets more than 0.2 mm.

Many special steel components have great requirements placed upon them with respect to strength and corrosion resistance. Typical examples of such components are tension

rods, tie rods, supports, pipes, sleeves, sheets, profiles with different cross-sections and so forth. Other components with variable cross-sections such as, for example, shafts, which have different, graduated diameters in some areas, have to satisfy great requirements with respect to corrosion resistance and strength. The present invention
5 is directed towards such articles.

Semi-finished and finished products of this type made from austenitic corrosion-resistant special steel firstly generally obtain their strength by means of multiple cross-section reduction by cold rolling, selectively with or without intermediate solution annealing treatment. Lastly, for suitable components heat treatment in a furnace, a
10 precipitation hardening, typically in a nitrogen atmosphere, takes place. There is, nevertheless the risk of chromium carbide precipitation, which leads to reduction of the corrosion resistance and increase in the risk of inter-crystalline corrosion. Moreover, heat treatment in the furnace inevitably causes precipitation hardening over the entire volume of material. A partial increase in the strength of specific component
15 areas is thus not possible. Precipitation hardening in the furnace is extraordinarily time and cost-intensive, and increases the price of the corresponding products by several times as much.

Appropriate substances are described, for example, in European Patent No. 545 852 B1, and European Patent Application 774 589 A1.

20 The present application takes priority from German Utility Patent Nos. 299 14 269, 299 14 802, 299 16 517, 299 21 121 and 299 21 813, the contents of which are incorporated herein in their entirety by this reference to them.

A self-tapping screw made from corrosion-resistant material is known from DE-OS 198 15 670 that is inductively hardened in the lower cutting and thread area. With such
25 screws, the hardened structures nevertheless form very fine and relatively thin-walled surface structures that have been subjected to a significant micro-structural change (work-hardening) in an earlier cold-working, so in this case inductive precipitation hardening found successful application as it was substantially limited to the threads only.

With respect to this prior art, the object of the present invention is to provide semi-finished and finished products and a method for their manufacture, that obtain a particularly advantageous combination of strength and corrosion-resistance with inexpensive manufacture.

- 5 This object is solved in that the steel material is precipitation hardened in a zone-wise manner.

Precipitation hardening is preferably done inductively, wherein alternatively laser irradiation is also conceivable.

- 10 The method for inductive precipitation hardening (or done by laser irradiation) has the substantial advantage that the areas and also the layer thickness within which precipitation hardening takes place can be completely, purposely selected. In this way strength and corrosion-resistance can be optimised by area, as generally the areas hardened by precipitation tend to be somewhat more susceptible to corrosion, but on the other hand have greater strength.

- 15 It has been shown, nevertheless, that inductive hardening is unexpectedly possible for the articles under discussion here, even though this appeared problematic for austenitic steels. This hardening method is possible in particular for austenitic steels with the composition (percentages by weight) set out in claim 4. Properties with respect to the combination of strength and corrosion-resistance are particularly advantageous when
20 the ranges of composition according to claim 6 are followed. In the preferred variations the amounts of the components set out in detail in claims 4 and 5 respectively are coordinated with one another such that the remaining quantity of iron is between 65 and 68%.

- 25 By means of these alloy quantities, the steel obtains a good degree of corrosion-resistance, comparable with A2 qualities. The limiting of the nitrogen content corresponds to its natural solubility in austenite, which increases with increased manganese content. Together with inductive precipitation hardening, the upper carbon content limit largely prevents formation of chromium carbide, which would preferably adapt itself to grain size, and lessens susceptibility to inter-crystalline corrosion.

The substance can be formed, in the manner usual for austenitic special steel alloys, by rolling or drawing into the desired final measurements, wherein in order to obtain the highest degree of strength, the course of fabrication has to be set out such that after the hot working or solution annealing treatment (solution annealing and quenching
5 eliminates the hardening caused by cold working), cross-section reduction > 40% by cold working has to be planned.

By means of this cold working, because of cold hardening and work-induced formation of martensite, strengths of $R_m = 1800 \text{ Mpa}$ can occur.

Subsequent inductive precipitation treatment that is undertaken in the temperature
10 range of $300^\circ\text{C} < T < 550^\circ\text{C}$ leads to formation of intermetallic phases. These are mainly nitrides and/or to a small extent carbides, that lead to the desired increase in strength and hardness respectively, of up to 30%, in particular in the structural areas that have already been most greatly strengthened and transformed by mechanical working. Limitation of the corrosion properties is not to be expected.

15 This heat treatment alone (in addition to laser irradiation that also has to be borne in mind) permits partial increase in strength in defined cross-section areas.

Because of the extremely short heat treatment times (several seconds), inductive precipitation hardening permits a clear price advantage compared to the components conventionally treated by several hours of furnace heating.

20 By means of the invention, articles with substantially smooth surfaces and a diameter greater than 1 mm are provided, that have both an advantageous raw material price – comparable with the known A2 qualities – with good corrosion-resistance properties, as well as selectively having a high degree of strength/hardness over the entire length or in some areas over the length or the cross-section.

25 With respect to the shapes and profile cross-sections, the articles according to the invention can vary in wide ranges. Profile parts in the shape of sheets, rods or also wires, that can be passed continuously through an inductive treatment are preferred.

Further advantages, features and possibilities for application of the present invention

will be evident from the following description of preferred embodiments and the attached drawings.

There is shown, in:

- Figure 1 a profile part with a quadratic cross-section,
- 5 Figure 2 a profile part with L-shaped cross-section,
- Figure 3 a profile part with the cross-section of a regular octagon,
- Figure 4 a profile part with a U-shaped cross-section,
- Figure 5 a profile part with a cross-shaped cross-section,
- Figure 6 a profile part with a double T cross-section, and
- 10 Figure 7 different views of a shaft manufactured from the steel material according to the invention.

In Figures 1 to 6, different profile parts are shown that differ substantially in their cross-section, which however remain constant in the case of the respective profile part over their length, wherein the length of the profile parts can in principle, be as desired.

- 15 For practical purposes, such profile parts typically have lengths of approximately 6 m, but if they are sufficiently flexible they can also be wrapped into rolls and are then transportable in significantly greater lengths. Clearly, hollow profiles such as, for example, pipes, with the greatest variation of cross-section shapes can also be manufactured with the features according to the invention.

- 20 In the case of the profile parts shown, the longitudinal edge, sharp corner areas can be more or less greatly rounded off. Precipitation hardening of the parts is done inductively and can thus be selectively limited to areas as desired, that is to say to different longitudinal sections and to different cross-section areas.

- 25 Hardening is preferably done in a surface layer, the total cross-section of which comprises between 1 and 50% of the total profile cross-section, or respectively the wall thickness of the steel material.

Inductive precipitation hardening of components of austenitic special steels reduces the heat treatment duration to the region of several seconds to a few minutes. This method – in contrast to overall treatment – offers the possibility of selectively increasing the strength/hardness of areas at risk of failure, while in remaining areas optimum

5 toughness properties are retained.

Claims

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1. Semi-finished and finished products in the form of sheets, profiles or shafts made of corrosion-resistant, precipitation hardenable, austenitic special steel with a high interstitially dissolved nitrogen content, with substantially smooth surfaces, characterised in that the steel material is precipitation hardened in a zoned manner, and in that the steel has a chemical composition within the following ranges:
- 5
- | | |
|----|---------------|
| C | 0.08 – 0.115% |
| Mn | 1.5 – 4% |
| Mo | 0.3 – 1.5% |
| Cr | 17.5 – 20% |
| Ni | 10 – 13% |
| N | 0.2 – 0.5% |
- 10
- wherein the remainder is substantially composed of iron.
- 15
2. Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 1, characterised in that the steel material is inductively precipitation hardened in a zoned manner.
3. Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 1 or 2, characterised in that they are at least partly hardened in a surface layer, wherein the thickness of the precipitation hardened layer is less than 50%, preferably less than 30% and in particular less than 10% of the material thickness measured perpendicular to the surface.
- 20
4. Semi-finished and finished products according to one of claims 1 to 3, characterised in that they are either sheets or profile rods with a substantially constant cross-section over their length.
- 25
5. Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 4, characterised in that the profile cross-section is circular, elliptical, quadratic, hexagonal, octagonal, L-shaped, cross-shaped, U-shaped or double T-shaped.

amended

6. Semi-finished and finished products according to claim 6, characterised in that the steel material is a sheet or a plate with substantially constant material thickness.
- 5 7. Finished product according to one of claims 1 to 3, characterised in that it is a shaft with a diameter that varies along its axial length.
8. Method for manufacturing semi-finished and finished products from corrosion-resistant, precipitation hardenable austenitic special steel with a high interstitially dissolved nitrogen content, characterised in that a steel material
10 with the following chemical composition is firstly manufactured:

C	0.082 – 0.115%
Mn	1.5 – 4%
Mo	0.3 – 1.5%
Cr	17.5 – 20%
15 Ni	10 – 13%
N	0.2 – 0.5%

wherein the remainder is substantially composed of iron, in that the material worked in the still hot, or re-heated state into semi-finished and finished products with a substantially smooth surface, and as required can also be cold-
20 worked, and in that subsequently a precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken that affects at the most a part of the volume of the semi-finished and/or finished products.
9. Method according to claim 8, characterised in that inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken in a temperature range of 300°C to 550°C.
- 25 10. Method according to claim 8 or 9, characterised in that inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken such that the precipitation hardening only occurs in a surface layer with a layer thickness of 0.5 mm at the most.

11. Method according to one of claims 8 to 10, characterised in that the material is substantially endless material or rod material or respectively sheet material that is passed continuously through an induction apparatus.

12. Method according to one of claims 8 to 10, characterised in that instead of inductive treatment, precipitation hardening is done by laser irradiation.

12. Method according to claim 10 or 11, characterised in that inductive precipitation hardening treatment is undertaken such that the precipitation hardening only occurs in a surface layer with a layer thickness of 0.5 mm at the most.

10	C	0.082 – 0.115%
	Mn	1.5 – 4%
	Mo	0.3 – 1.5%
	Cr	17.5 – 20%
	Ni	10 – 13%
15	N	0.2 – 0.5%

14. Method according to one of claims 10 to 13, characterised in that the material is substantially endless material or rod material or respectively sheet material that is passed continuously through an induction apparatus.

25

(12) NACH DEM VERTRAG ÜBER DIE INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT AUF DEM GEBIET DES
PATENTWESENS (PCT) VERÖFFENTLICHTE INTERNATIONALE ANMELDUNG

(19) Weltorganisation für geistiges Eigentum
Internationales Büro



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17. August 2000 (17.08.2000)

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299 14 802.5 24. August 1999 (24.08.1999) DE
299 16 517.5 15. September 1999 (15.09.1999) DE
299 21 121.5 1. Dezember 1999 (01.12.1999) DE
299 21 813.9 12. Dezember 1999 (12.12.1999) DE

(71) Anmelder und

(72) Erfinder: **FRIEDERICH, Heinrich** [DE/DE]; Bein-
strasse 15, 68649 Gross-Rohrheim (DE). **SCHMOOCK,**
Reinhard [DE/DE]; Wiesengarten 26, 57250 Netphen
(DE).

(74) Anwalt: **WEBER, SEIFFERT, LIEKE**; Gustav-Freytag-
Strasse 25, Postfach 61 45, D-65051 Wiesbaden (DE).

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(84) Bestimmungsstaaten (*regional*): ARIPO-Patent (GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), eura-
sisches Patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
europäisches Patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI,
FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI-Patent
(BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE,
SN, TD, TG).

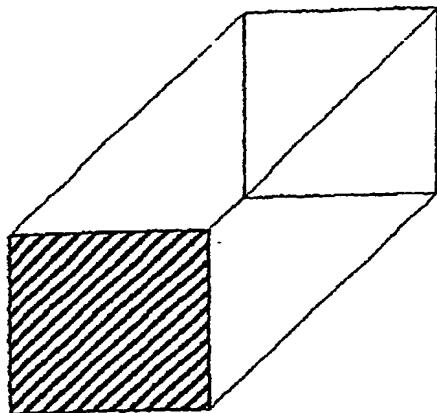
Veröffentlicht:

- Mit internationalem Recherchenbericht.
- Vor Ablauf der für Änderungen der Ansprüche geltenden
Frist; Veröffentlichung wird wiederholt, falls Änderungen
eintreffen.

Zur Erklärung der Zweibuchstaben-Codes, und der anderen
Abkürzungen wird auf die Erklärungen ("Guidance Notes on
Codes and Abbreviations") am Anfang jeder regulären Ausgabe
der PCT-Gazette verwiesen.

(54) Title: SEMIFINISHED AND FINISHED PRODUCTS MADE OF AUSTENITIC SPECIAL STEEL AND METHOD FOR
THE PRODUCTION THEREOF

(54) Bezeichnung: HALBZEUGE UND FERTIGPRODUKTE AUS AUSTENITISCHEM EDELSTAHL UND VERFAHREN ZU
DEREN HERSTELLUNG



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to semifinished and finished products made from special corrosion-resistant precipitation-hardened austenitic steel containing a large amount of interstitially dissolved nitrogen, comprising substantially smooth surfaces. The invention also relates to a method for producing corresponding semifinished and finished items. The aim of the invention is to produce semifinished and finished items and to provide an economical method for the production thereof, combining both solidity and resistance to corrosion. This is achieved by precipitation-hardening areas of the steel material.

(57) Zusammenfassung: Die vorliegende Erfindung betrifft Halbzeuge und Fertigprodukte, hergestellt aus korrosionsbeständigem ausscheidungshärtbaren austenitischen Edelstahl mit einem hohen Gehalt an interstitiell gelöstem Stickstoff, mit im Wesentlichen glatten Oberflächen. Ebenso betrifft die vorliegende Erfindung auch ein Verfahren zur Herstellung entsprechender Halbzeuge und Fertigprodukte. Um Halbzeuge und Fertigprodukte sowie ein Verfahren zu deren Herstellung zu schaffen, die bei preisgünstiger Herstellung

eine besonders günstige Kombination von Festigkeit und Korrosionsbeständigkeit erzielen, wird erfindungsgemäß vorgeschlagen, daß das Stahlmaterial zonenweise ausscheidungsgehärtet ist.

WO 01/14600 A1

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BLRNS DOANE

703 836 2021 P.04/08

COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION

Attorney's Docket No.

029771-008

As a below-named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name;

I BELIEVE I AM THE ORIGINAL, FIRST AND SOLE INVENTOR (if only one name is listed below) OR AN ORIGINAL, FIRST AND JOINT INVENTOR (if more than one name is listed below) OF THE SUBJECT MATTER WHICH IS CLAIMED AND FOR WHICH A PATENT IS SOUGHT ON THE INVENTION ENTITLED:

SEMI-FINISHED AND FINISHED PRODUCTS MADE OF AUSTENITIC SPECIAL STEEL AND METHOD FOR THE MANUFACTURE THEREOF

the specification of which

(check one)



is attached hereto;



was filed on August 17, 2000

as

Application No. PCT/DE00/02800

and was amended on _____;

(if applicable)

I HAVE REVIEWED AND UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF THE ABOVE-IDENTIFIED SPECIFICATION, INCLUDING THE CLAIMS, AS AMENDED BY ANY AMENDMENT REFERRED TO ABOVE;

I ACKNOWLEDGE THE DUTY TO DISCLOSE TO THE OFFICE ALL INFORMATION KNOWN TO ME TO BE MATERIAL TO PATENTABILITY AS DEFINED IN TITLE 37, CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, Sec. 1.56 (as amended effective March 16, 1992);

I do not know and do not believe the said invention was ever known or used in the United States of America before my or our invention thereof, or patented or described in any printed publication in any country before my or our invention thereof or more than one year prior to said application; that said invention was not in public use or on sale in the United States of America more than one year prior to said application; that said invention has not been patented or made the subject of an inventor's certificate issued before the date of said application in any country foreign to the United States of America on any application filed by me or my legal representatives or assigns more than twelve months prior to said application;

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code Sec. 119 and/or Sec. 365 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate as indicated below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate on this invention having a filing date before that of the application(s) on which priority is claimed:

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BURNS DOANE

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COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY	Attorney's Docket No. 029777-008
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COUNTRY/INTERNATIONAL	APPLICATION NUMBER	DATE OF FILING (day, month, year)	PRIORITY CLAIMED
Germany	299 14 269.8	19 August 1999	YES X NO
Germany	299 14 802.5	24 August 1999	YES X NO
Germany	299 16 517.5	15 September 1999	YES X NO
Germany	299 21 121.5	1 December 1999	YES X NO
Germany	299 21 813.9	12 December 1999	YES X NO

I hereby appoint the following attorneys and agent(s) to prosecute said application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith and to file, prosecute and to transact all business in connection with international applications directed to said invention:

William L. Mathis 17,437	Eric H. Washlake 30,405	Todd R. Walcott 34,040
Robert S. Swicker 19,685	James W. Poirson 26,057	Royce S. Hines 31,979
Patrice N. Mandros 22,174	Teresa Samak Rea 30,427	Harold R. Brown III 36,341
Bernard S. Duffin, Jr. 22,010	William C. Rowland 30,888	Allan R. Baum 36,086
Norman H. Sapiro 22,716	T. Gene Dillabury 25,422	Brian P. O'Shaughnessy 32,727
Ronald L. Grudziecki 24,870	Patrick C. Kane 32,838	Kenneth B. LeBer 36,973
Frederick G. Machaud, Jr. 24,043	B. Jefferson Boggs, Jr. 32,344	Fred W. Harnsaw 32,238
Alan E. Kopecki 25,813	William H. Benz 25,532	Wendi L. Weinstein 34,456
Begis E. Slusher 26,592	Peter K. Skiff 31,917	Mary Ann Dillabury 34,576
Samuel C. Miller, III 27,360	Richard J. McGrath 29,189	Donna M. Meuth 36,607
Robert G. Muloi 28,331	Matthew L. Schneider 32,813	Mark H. Kresloff 42,785
George A. Hovance, Jr. 28,223	Michael G. Savage 32,586	
James A. LaBarre 28,632	Gerald F. Swins 30,113	
B. Joseph Gess 28,310	Charles F. Wichard III 31,096	
B. Danny Hurdington 27,503	Brice T. Wiedler 33,813	

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and: Scott W. Cummings, Reg. No. 41,567

Address all correspondence to:



21839

Ronald L. Grudziecki
BURNS, DOANE, SWICKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.
P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404

Address all telephone calls to: Scott W. Cummings at (703) 836-6620.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

FULL NAME OF SOLE OR FIRST INVENTOR Reinrich FRIEDERICH	SIGNATURE <i>[Signature]</i>	DATE 18/06/02
RESIDENCE Gross-Rohrheim, Germany	CITIZENSHIP Germany	
POST OFFICE ADDRESS Beimstrasse 15, 68649 Gross-Rohrheim, Germany		

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BURNS DORNE

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COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY FOR UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION Supplemental Sheet	Attorney's Docket No. 029777-008
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2.00

FULL NAME OF SECOND JOINT INVENTOR, IF ANY Reinhard SCHMOOCK	SIGNATURE Reinhard Schmoock	DATE 18.06.2002
RESIDENCE Neupien, Germany	CITIZENSHIP Germany	
POST-OFFICE ADDRESS Wiesengarten 26, 57250 Neupien, Germany		